

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Justification

Advisory Committee on the Bird Banding Laboratory

Explain why Committee is essential:

In the last 10 years much change has taken place in bird banding. The Bird Banding Laboratory has assumed additional duties and responsibilities, including: administration of a joint USGS/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Reward Band Study and a 1-800 number for reporting band recoveries; implementation of much-needed data management/system upgrades and improvements, and the Web technology revolution for customer service. The composition of the banding community is changing as non-game banders now account for over one-half of all birds banded annually. In view of these changes and because the Laboratory also has a responsibility to address the needs of and solicit advice from its expanding non-Federal conservation and research constituency, it is essential that an Advisory Committee be convened.

Explain why the Committee's functions cannot be performed by the proposing agency, another agency, or an existing FACA Committee:

Many of the Laboratory's cooperators and stakeholders are non-federal. Their interests and needs may not be accurately or adequately portrayed if they are not included as active participants in the process to identify necessary changes and improvements to the Laboratory. A FACA Committee format is necessary to reach a fair and balanced compromise in attempting to meet the diverse banding community's oft-times distinct needs for resources and information products. There is no other existing FACA Committee with responsibility for advising the Federal Government on bird banding activities.

Explain why another means such as a public meeting cannot do the job instead of a Committee:

Because the USGS is asking the Committee to develop a report that defines a vision for the Laboratory over the next ten to fifteen years, as well as recommend priority actions to meet the needs of the migratory bird regulatory, conservation, and banding communities, a single public meeting will not suffice. The report will include an evaluation of the Laboratory's goals and objectives and recommend priorities and milestones to accomplish the goals and evaluate progress toward achieving the vision.

Describe agency plan to ensure balance of membership:

In order for the Department of the Interior to be advised by a broad and balanced spectrum of the bird banding community, the Secretary will appoint members to the Committee representing all major Bird Banding Laboratory stakeholder groups. This includes: game and non-game bird banders; Canadian Wildlife Service; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; state wildlife conservation organizations; academia; professional and technical ornithological societies; waterfowl and upland game bird hunting organizations; and nonprofit conservation organizations.